

Retelling Details in a Text

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Most of what adults read consists of nonfiction text. Newspapers, reports, and online material are where many of us turn for information. We want to expose our youngest readers to this genre early on.

The purpose of reading is to make sense of the text. Do you want your young scholar to be able to know the main topic and the most relevant details? How can we determine if our child is able to do this? Simply asking your child to retell the most important events is one of the first comprehension skills to practice.



Retelling Skills for Pre-K Students

After reading a nonfiction text, follow up with a retelling activity. The key idea and details strand follows students from pre-K through grade 12. The foundational skills involve the basic retelling of a text.

Retelling should not be confused with summarizing. Think of it as a prerequisite to summarizing, synthesizing, and paraphrasing.

When faced with nonfiction text, we want our scholars to recall the main topic and relevant supporting details.

What to Expect at this Stage

Identifying the main topic: Your child should be able to determine the main focus of an article.

Pointing out relevant details: With support and repetition, help your child decide what information to gather. This is a sophisticated skill that needs refinement over time.

Making a personal connection: Pose questions that allow your student to attach new learning to his own life's experiences.

The Next Level of Skills

Paraphrasing text details: Ultimately, you want your child to be able to internalize and paraphrase a nonfiction text. This requires advanced vocabulary and critical thinking skills. Model the skill for your youngster while understanding that this is simply for exposure. Spend more time focused on directly retelling information from the text.

Making high-level inferences: Implied understanding relies on background knowledge about a topic. You may find that your child can infer information about one text, but can't carry this skill over to another. This is likely not yet a part of your child's schema, and your child will need vocabulary development and concept attainment for this topic.

Choosing Appropriate Informational Texts

Focus on nonfiction texts with the following features:

Vivid Photographs: Your child takes cues from photographs. Choose texts with bright vivid photos to capture your young reader's attention.

Simple Sentences: This is not the time to explore non-literal language and complex sentence structures. The goal for your scholar is to attain the information to retell the most pressing information.

Familiar Subjects: Whenever possible, provide access to texts according to your child's interest. Expect your child's interests to change frequently. Cultivate text sets that give fun facts and fresh information.

These resources from Kids Academy are a great way to introduce retelling to your child.



Watch on [YouTube](#)

Retelling the Details:

What Can the Sun Melt?



1. Listen to the text about how the sun can melt things.

The sun's heat is very hot. It can melt things here on Earth. What do you think the sun can melt? Did you know the sun can melt **ice**? The sun can melt **chocolate**. The sun can even melt a **marshmallow**! The sun can melt a lot of things that we eat. The sun cannot melt a **lego**. It won't melt a **block** or a **marble**. But, it will melt a **snowman**!

2. Check the objects the sun can melt.

1. The sun can melt _____



legos

a snowman



2. The sun can melt _____



a block

chocolate



3. The sun can melt _____



a marshmallow

a marble



4. The sun can melt _____



a book

ice



Weather Every Day



Listen to the poem about the weather. Check all of the words that tell you about what kinds of weather you may see.

Each and every day,
When you go outside to play,
You might notice the weather.

Some days it's **cloudy** and **rain** falls from the sky.
Some days it is cold and you can see **snow** falling close by.
Some days the **wind** will blow with all of its might.

Other days the **sun** will shine oh so bright.

Each and every day,
We notice the weather when we play.



car



cloudy



rain



snow



apple



dog



cat



wind



sun

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Instructional Strategies to Support Retelling

Your child is currently positioned right in the middle of what Piaget defines as the preoperational stage of development. This means that you need to make learning experiences concrete.

Visual aids outside of the nonfiction article are essential to building lasting knowledge. An anchor chart with definitions of text features will help. Focus on the terms title, photographs, and text.

What Learning Aids Can Be Helpful

Pre-K students find success with the five-finger retell technique. Assign a retelling prompt to each finger as a visual reminder as your child works through this task.

Thumb: What is the topic of this text?

Index, Middle, and Ring Fingers: Identify three supporting details.

Pinky: Make a personal connection to the text.

If you're wondering where to start, look for nonfiction publications designed for children. Highlights, Scholastic News, Time for Kids, and National Geographic for Kids are commonly used in schools.

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